



# the Wesleyan Magazine of Creative Arts

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VOLUME XXXII

WINTER, 1966

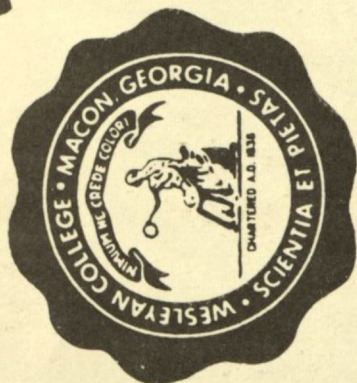
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COVER: OIL PAINTING (26x34") MARCEL DWORET

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INSIDE BACK COVER: CRITICAL REVIEW OF THIS ISSUE,

BACK COVER: PENCIL DRAWING, "Yonder Breaks the Light of Macon," by Karen Wickwire



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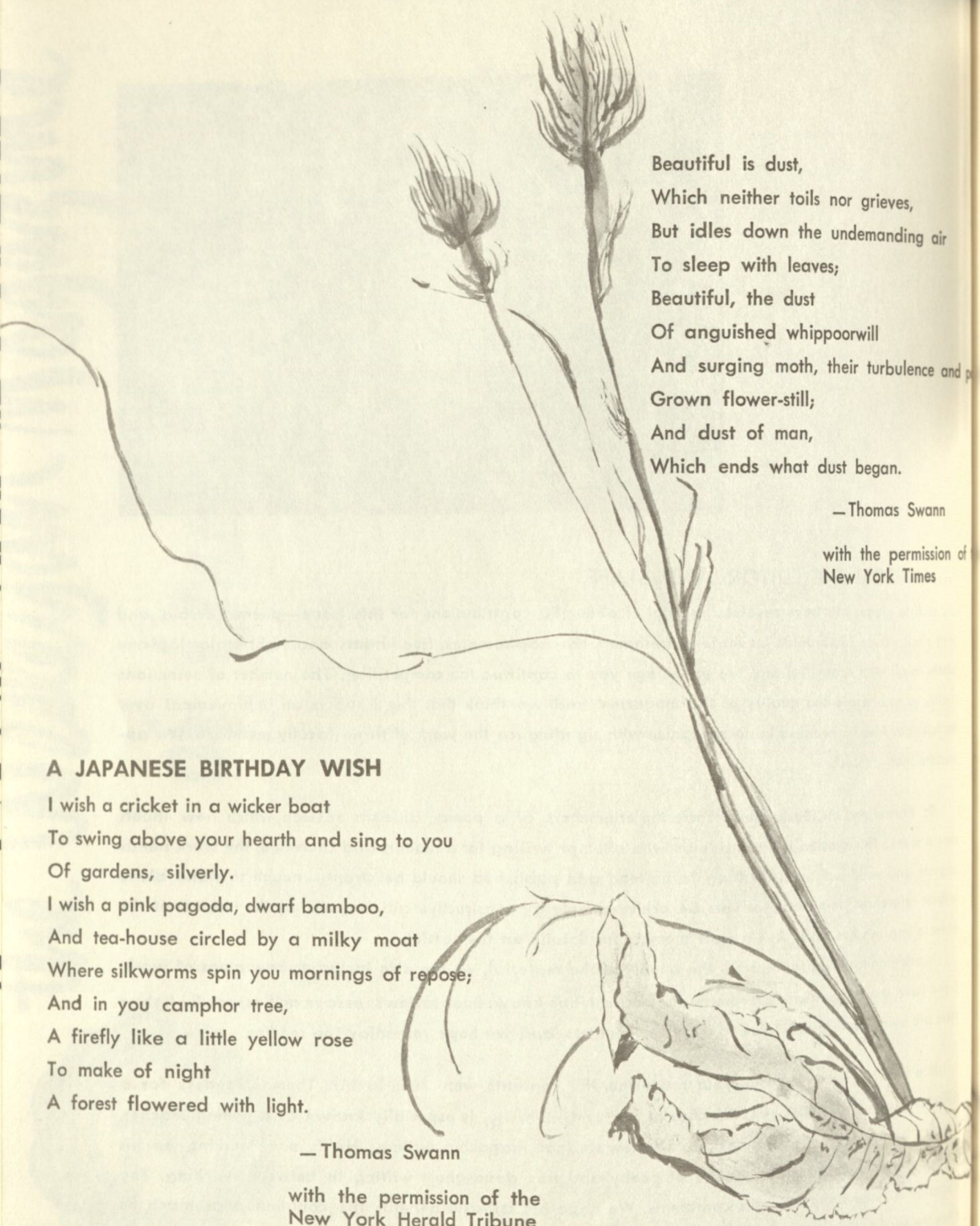
## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR AND STAFF

The staff is pleased to have received a total of about 80 contributions for this issue—poems, essays and short stories from 35 students (seventeen freshmen, five sophomores, five juniors and eight seniors). Many thanks to all who submitted and we encourage you to continue the competition. The number of selections enable us to improve the quality of the magazine, and we think that this issue is an improvement over the fall one. Also we would like to recognize with significance the work of three faculty members. We appreciate their interest.

Dr. Krickel and Mr. Beckelheimer are the originators of a poetry criticism session which now meets once a week. This session is for students who attempt writing for a reader, and therefore, the work needs accurate and valid judgment. Writing to be read and published should be strong enough to stand alone without references. Improvement can be achieved only by constructive criticism and by the interest of the writer to improve her work. Ask a staff member for details on the session.

In addition to trying to improve the quality of the material, we are also including new types of work. If you have any suggestions or comments please let us know. Book reviews, essays and especially lighter verse are being used in this issue to vary the contents, and we hope you enjoy the reading.

In a further effort to improve your magazine, the contents were sent to Mr. Thomas Landess for a critical review. Mr. Landess, who teaches at Furman University, is especially known as a writing teacher, and thus, a critic who is frequently asked to review student magazine writing. He is now working on his fourth novel, has written plays, books of poetry and has done ghost writing in between teaching. The magazine is fortunate to have his comments. We hope his criticism benefits the contributors as much as it has the staff.



Beautiful is dust,  
Which neither toils nor grieves,  
But idles down the undemanding air  
To sleep with leaves;  
Beautiful, the dust  
Of anguished whippoorwill  
And surging moth, their turbulence and pain  
Grown flower-still;  
And dust of man,  
Which ends what dust began.

—Thomas Swann

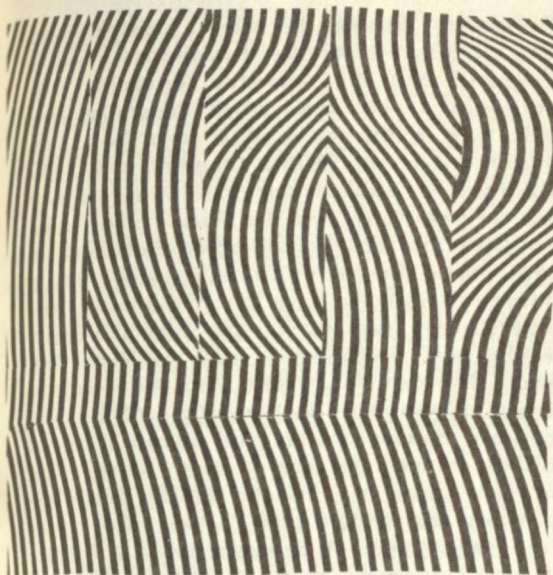
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New York Times

### A JAPANESE BIRTHDAY WISH

I wish a cricket in a wicker boat  
To swing above your hearth and sing to you  
Of gardens, silverly.  
I wish a pink pagoda, dwarf bamboo,  
And tea-house circled by a milky moat  
Where silkworms spin you mornings of repose;  
And in you camphor tree,  
A firefly like a little yellow rose  
To make of night  
A forest flowered with light.

—Thomas Swann

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## THE THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

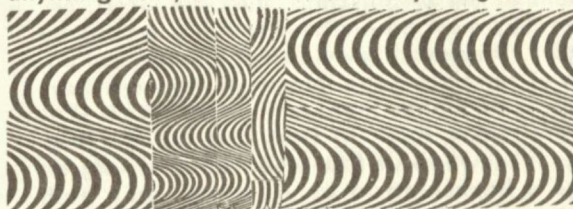
by  
lynn burnett

Lecture Delivered to  
The President's Seminar  
December 4, 1965

The culture of any civilization is almost always reflected by its art, and it is the culture of post war Europe with its economic, moral, spiritual and physical drainage that the Theatre of the Absurd reflects. It has been defined by Ionesco as: "Absurd is that which is void of purpose . . . cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless." It is essentially concerned with the projection of concrete, specific poetic images with the purpose of communicating to the audience the sense of perplexity that the author feels when he is confronted with "the human condition." In general, the human condition seems to be a man surrounded with many sets of organized value systems, commercial slogans, and the everyday mundane environment that we all have to live through. But "real" man exists in isolation, unable to communicate with his fellows, and in the agony that there is a large body of absolute knowledge, e.g. Truth, that he will never be able to see, much less understand. The Theatre of the Absurd, through mediums such as the degradation of language, non-plots, unreal, i.e. unnaturalistic characters, dream fantasies and symbols, and nonsense dialogue, attempts to explore the world of the psychological unconscious; to explain why logical value systems are senseless; and to find out what reality actually is, since it is not in the objective, external reality.

The absurd is concerned also with a quest and a question. The quest, oddly enough, is religious; if not in search of god, then at least in search of something that we may call an ultimate reality. Martin Esslin, in his book *Theatre of the Absurd*, says of this search: "(it is) an effort to make man aware of an absolute reality of his condition, a dimension of the Ineffable, to instill in him again the lost sense of cosmic

wonder and primeval anguish, to shock him out of an existence that has become trite, mechanical, complacent, and deprived of the dignity that comes of awareness." And this is why the images of people of the plays of the Absurd have no dignity—they have not become Aware of the human condition and its ultimate reality. And in presenting this reality, the Absurdist ask questions: why will not man accept his condition; face the stark inner world where there are no certainties? The question is in *Waiting for Godot*, where man is faced with Time and is therefore waiting; and in Ionesco's *The Killer*, where man is confronted with a mirage of illusions, mirrors reflecting mirrors and forever hiding absolute reality; or in Albee's *Tiny Alice*, when the Butler says of the model of the house in which he is standing, "You don't suppose that within that tiny model there, there is . . . another room like this, with yet a tinier model within it, and within . . ."—the truth of this fact Julian cannot accept until he dies. The Theatre of the Absurd, whatever it may appear, represents a return to the original, religious function of the theatre—the confrontation of man with the worlds of myth and religious reality. And in these worlds it asks yet more questions: "How does this man feel when he becomes aware of the human condition, if he becomes aware at all, and if he doesn't, why not?" What is his basic mood in which he faces it? What is it like to be like him? The answer is complex, written in poetic images, and written in terms of an agonizing search for something, anything real, and therefore truly religious.



The proponents of the Absurd seem to be split as to whether there is any hope at all that man can ever see or understand a true reality, such as the Buddhist Ineffable Nothingness." There is a scene in Genet's *The Blacks*, where Village, a leading character, speaks of his love for Virtue, a black prostitute: "We—you and I, were moving along the edges of the world, out of bounds. We were the shadows, or dark interiors, of luminous creatures. But, when I beheld you, suddenly, for perhaps a second, I had the strength to reject everything that wasn't you and to laugh at the illusion. But my shoulders were very frail . . ." For a moment when love was kindled, Genet saw Village at the threshold of reality. And even though his shoulders were frail, at the end of the play, Virtue and Village turn their backs to the audience and walk towards the cast, who are assembled at the back of the stage. So the lovers have turned their backs on the world of illusion—or that world in which the audience lives. Beckett, however, while not denying a higher reality, takes a different tack. The sighting of the little boy in *Endgame* may well stand for redempt from the illusion of Time through the recognition and acceptance of a

higher reality. For the little boy, like the Buddha, contemplates his navel, which means he is contemplating on the great emptiness of Nirvana. But none of the Absurdists deny that there is a true reality somewhere; the majority seem to think it is Nirvana; and all think man will never be able to see it, or understand it.

The literary media has all been used before, but never in this particular type of organization. The first and most obvious is the use of nonsense language. The theory is that the degradation of language will burst the walls of logic and language—that it batters the walls of the human condition itself. Language has so often proved itself inadequate for communication, for instance, news of the death of a loved one, that the Absurdists figure that the only things that can be communicated in words are poetic images and the satiric use of truisms and clichés. In Esslin's words it is "precisely the desire to grasp the shadow when the sun is gone, or to hear the unspoken speeches of mankind, that lies behind the impulse to speak nonsense." Of course, nonsense language is not new—Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll are perhaps the most famous nonsense writers, and their works are filled with aesthetic and philosophical inquiries. And then there are the delightful nonsense playlets of King Lear. All of these have had a direct influence on the Absurdists.

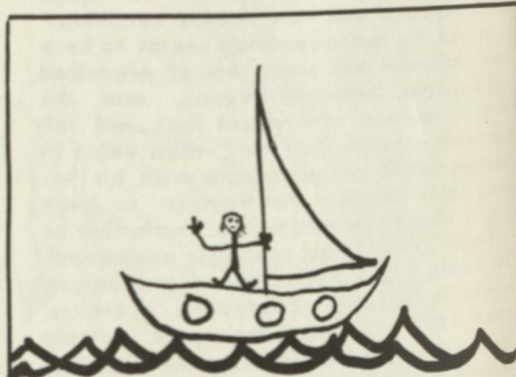
Also characteristics of the Theatre of the Absurd is the use of non-plots, such as the theme and variations of *Waiting for Godot*, and the definitely nonstandard characters used. The characters that we see are usually dream projections of the unconscious; they are used because they must be—otherwise there would be no play. They are highly distorted mirror reflections of ourselves—the images of our own fantasies. What makes them terrifyingly real is that we are seeing them in flesh and blood. They make it known to us that what is happening on stage is happening to us, as surely as both actors and audience exist in their own bodies. And because they exist in our subjective unconscious, they are freed from the tired boundaries of logic and therefore from the standard characters of Sophocles, Ibsen, and Shaw, who must be "real" in the objective sense of the word.

The use of foolish characters to point out or to demonstrate the condition of mankind is as old as drama itself. Aristophanes used clowns and fools, often in the guise of such notables as Socrates. Historian Hermann Reich has traced the fool, or mimus, of Rome down through the Midaeval farces of Europe to the Commedia dell'Arte through Shakespeares clowns. Reich says that "in the mimus, high and low, serious, even horrifying matters are miraculously mingled with the burlesque and the humorous; flat realism with highly fantastically and magical elements." The trace of the Absurd can clearly be seen in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, where the fool says

"As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;  
They kill us for their sport."

After Shakespeare, the mimus reappears in the pantomimes of the French Funambulesm, where

Debureau created the silent, lovesick Pierrot. The tradition is continued in the music halls of England and the American Vaudeville stage comedians with their often nonsensical cross talk and comic songs. And from there to the silent movies of Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton. The strain is continued in the talkies of Laurel and Hardy and the Marx Brothers. Ionesco says that the Marx Brothers influenced him more than the French Surrealists did. And of course there is the long line of the world's famous clowns, such as the late inimitable Emmett Kelly, and pantomimists such as Marcel Marceau. The fact also remains that the mimus, and especially the old silent movies, not infrequently contain curious dreams and hallucinations—all of which may be seen in any Absurd play. In conclusion, the Theatre of the Absurd expresses the anxiety and despair that spring from the recognition by some few of us that man is surrounded by areas of impenetrable darkness, and that he may never know his true nature and purpose. His violent searching in the dark for himself and his purpose is what makes man so absurd. But man, when he confronts this fact experiences "the Ineffability, the emptiness, the nothingness at the base of the universe that forms the content of Eastern as well as Western Christian mystical experience." The awareness of the mysterious oneness beyond all rational comprehension gives serenity of mind and the strength to face the human condition. Ultimately, the Theatre of the Absurd does not reflect despair, or the return to unlighted irrational forces, but expresses modern man's attempt to come to terms with the world in which he lives. And the dignity of man comes in the ability to face reality in all its absurdity, "to accept it freely, without fear, without illusion—and to laugh at it."



My ship sails  
in the bay of life

My boat drifts  
along the shores of love

And I, fearing,  
let the oars lie still

—Pamela Anne Craig



## WINTER WHISPERINGS

Wintertime—

So cold.

The wind sobbed

a steady, piercing note  
through the night.

Snow smothered the black hills  
in brittle, stark, white abstractions.

Shivering tree limbs  
raked the bleak sky.

Then—

light washed the countryside  
and pinpointed tiny fox tracks.

The Eve's famous star  
shattered the vast expanse  
with a brightness of  
crushed diamonds.

The night marched slowly  
across the vaulted heaven  
shadowing a small dwelling  
crouched in the dark.

Soft, mellow rays drifted  
through a cabin window.

Human existence, long years  
native to this cloistered, primeval wood,  
breathed in the Christmas solitude.

The old patriarch  
wrapped in a ragged shawl—  
dozed.

The fire burned.

A log fell with a soft thud  
and sharp sparks burst  
onto the floor.

No clock erased the night away.  
No dog lay on the hearth  
with folded paws.

*Ann Zimmerman*

There was—

no other sound  
save the wailing wind.

Christmas Eve waned.  
His star burned bright.

The fire died with  
sputtering coals.

There was a motionless rhythm  
about the old man's chair.

And the snow fell  
with quiet weightlessness.

—Carol Payne

# Editorial

The train whistle sang mournfully in the distant grey of dawn . . . and I, unaware, slept on

I dreamed of fall last night. I remember now seeing so much green today . . . the leaves were half-stiff, not yet brown with death—their in-between stage of dying was brilliant . . .

Against a background of darker pine-forest green the bright yellow swayed down, and in and up among the stiff-charged wires

Silver-backed leaves turned around to be beautiful and browned ones began to crisp and break away. Every leaf paused in the bright, damp air . . . one leaf fell, now two, now three—the yellow spread majestically upon the ground . . . and . . . with each breeze, a treasure hoard of gold whirled away . . .

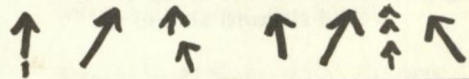
—Pamela Anne Craig

The question has been asked why we should not change the name of the magazine. The title was *The Wesleyan* until last year when it was changed to *The Wesleyan Magazine of Creative Arts*—creative is it not? As it is now, it is actually a subtitle.

The main idea to be remembered is that the title can only be changed on a concrete, permanent basis. It must endure the years ahead. The change, if it is made, will not be for the sake of change. It will be made to give meaning to the title. What does it mean to you now?

Instead of just the name of the school . . . (yes, the one in Georgia, Macon, Georgia . . . no, this is not the *Wesleyan Magazine for Alumnae*, nor the *Wesleyan Magazine, Historical or Biological Review*) . . . instead of it being called *The Magazine*, I think we need a strong, significant name.

Any ideas? I would appreciate your sending them to me, pro or con, to box 750.



## Why I am what I am: Just one glance

Orange peels in a Chinese ashtray  
Are quotes about a life  
Which includes baby powder  
And scored reality.

Books on books—  
Time was that they all were read.  
But the mirror is the only time now  
When face to face the words are said.

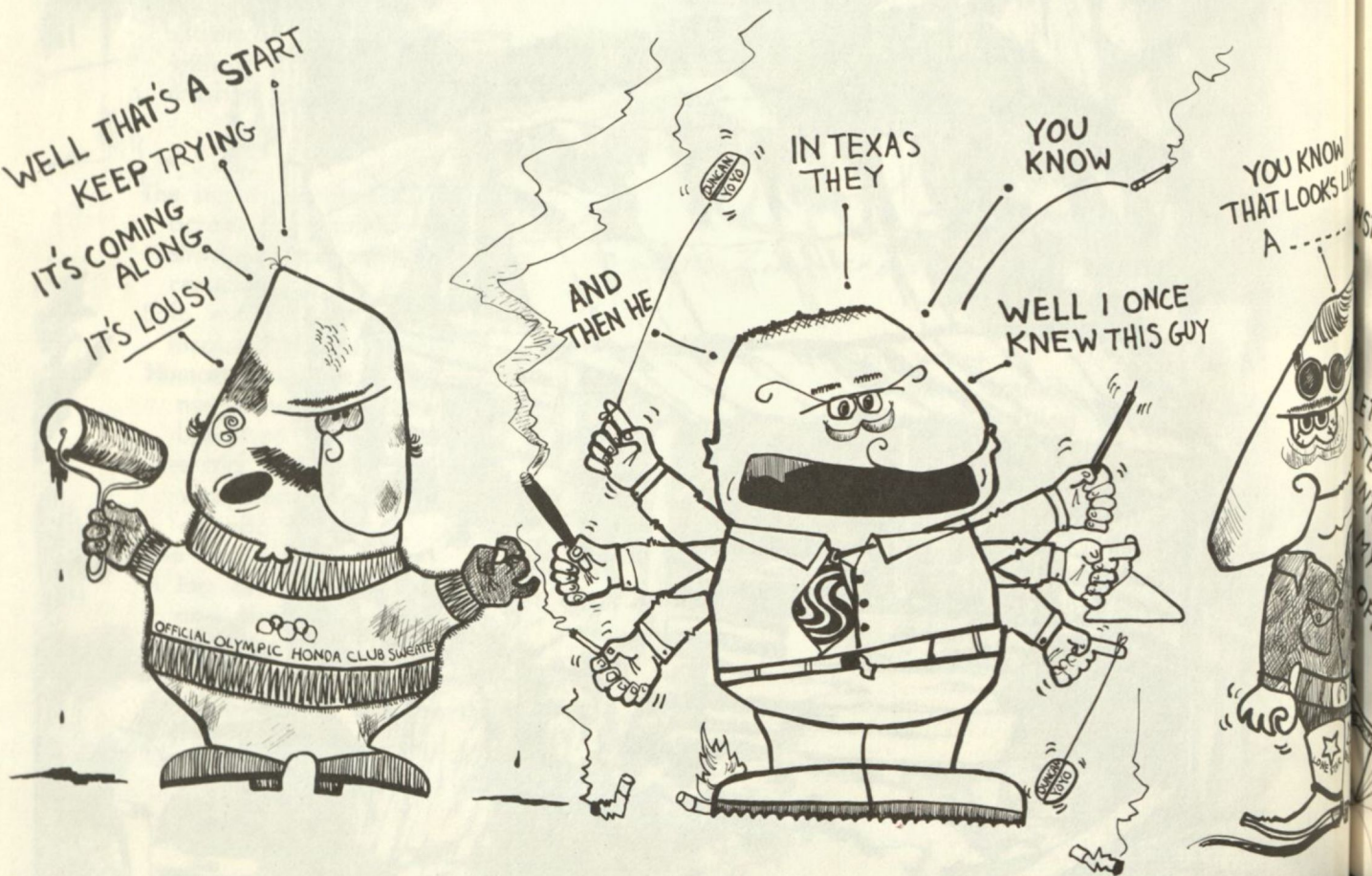
Scented soap and perfumed bath  
On beer and pretzels, clichés are made.  
Eyes are painted, mouth hard;  
Two-step tripping down the gaiety path.

Time was, but oh where was it?  
Reaching with timeless hands  
Which missed me in a glancing blow  
Leaving only time (and me) to repent  
And sit, and sit and sit.

—STS

## DAY to DAY

My name is third class mail  
Without the distinction of  
Being handled and controlled  
By the government, unless,  
Of course,  
My father winds up in the red.  
But there is the most beautiful meaning  
Behind the facial expression  
Depending on my mood.  
Meaning in plain talk,  
Nobody ever sees under the layer  
That's before blood.  
Almost nobody.



# WHY PEOPLE?

Why people? Why not talking trees?

An oak is honorable, majestic;

It does not eat its acorns.

—Mary Abbott Waite

Old women gnash their teeth.  
Red and black power symbols flash.  
Gaudy paint betrays heathen competition.  
Guttural, covetous sounds  
Are thrown from snarling lips.  
Thick black beverages are imbibed.  
Gray, heavy smoke from sacrifices to the  
Tension god curls in the air and hangs as a blanket.  
One crone is victorious and the others wail  
And fight the end's coming . . .

And kings, queens, jacks, tens, and jokers return  
to their box until the next Tuesday.

—Ann Almand

# Mistaken Identity

Cool college girl

overdressed and overfed.

A myriad of complaints about  
trivial monstrosities.

Books strapped to an ass's back,

Reflecting only in a mirror,

Planning only for a weekend,

Lighting only a room,

Thinking only one thought,

Writing only a letter,

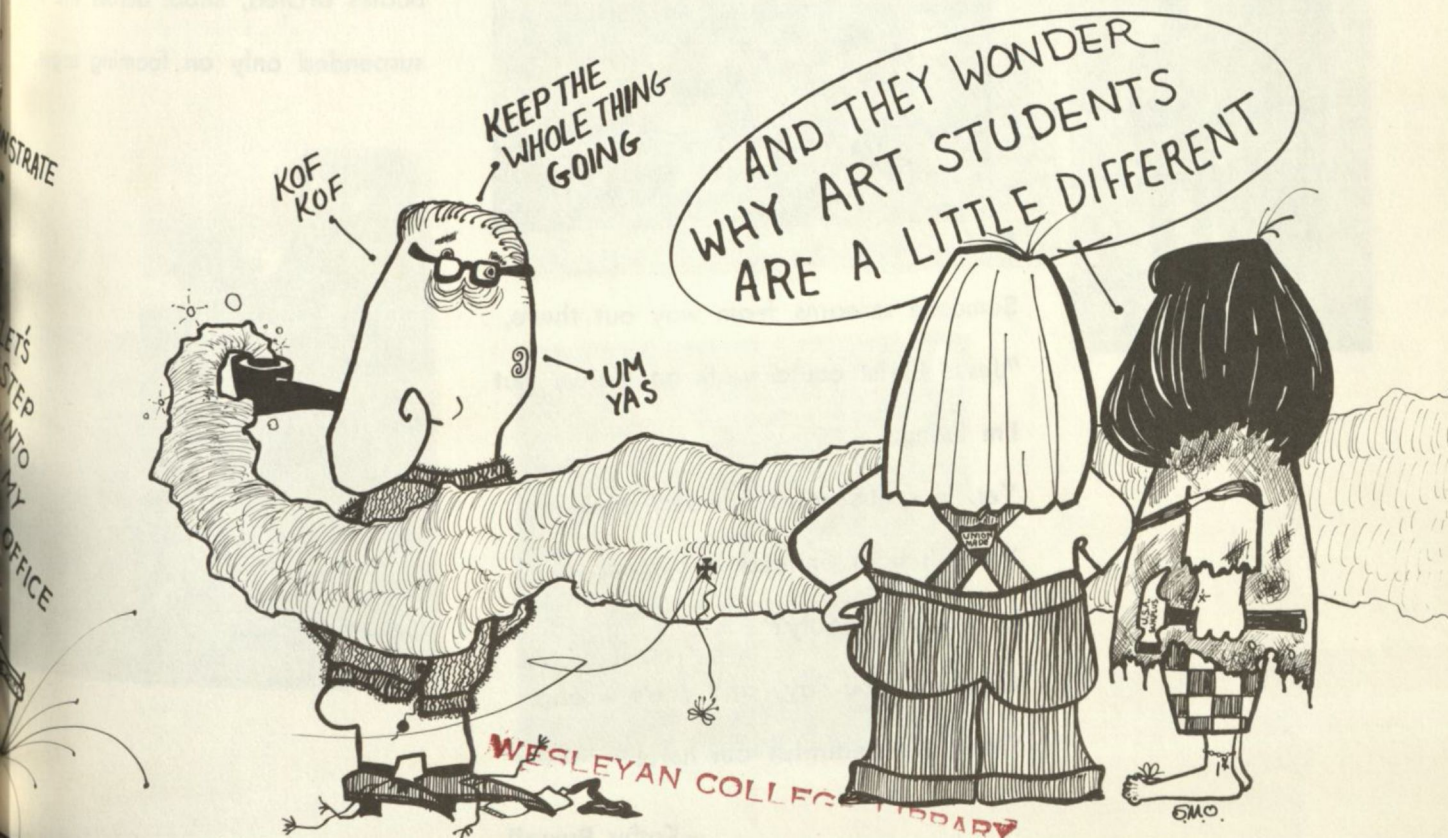
Exchanging only some clothes,

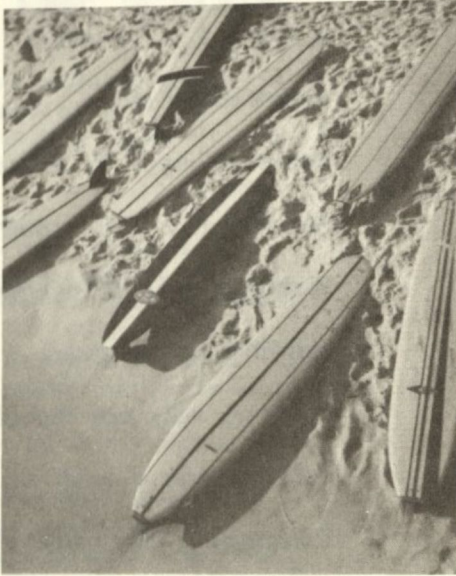
Watching only the time,

Dreaming other girls' dreams

And missing the Point entirely.

—Bebe Ferrell



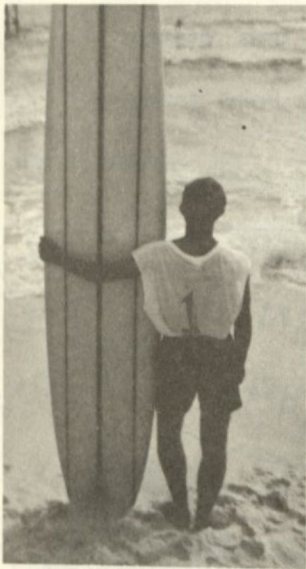


### Surf's up, Baby

Come on watch the leisure leeches  
paddling their planks

Like swarms of lemmings they scurry  
into the waves;

Beer babies brewed out of boredom.



### Surf

Someone screams from way out there,  
"Jesus Christ could walk on water, but  
I'm flying."

Yet, in split-second wonder, think—  
Weren't both enticed by waves  
of wanton beauty?

Different, you say, and one's wrong.

"Man, it's beautiful out here!"

### Surf's up

Water bucks like crazy and bolts  
toward the shore

Bodies arched, shoot across the water  
suspended only on foaming urges



—Kathy Russell

Once I could see infinity in crimson suns  
between sunset blackened pines. There  
commencing crickets were Druids of sound.

Once wind blew wisps of angel wings  
through the sand-built castles  
of my playground plains of pleasure.

I walked through streets and saw more than roofs.

I turned through pages and saw more than words.

I looked through windows and saw more than glass.

Now I am content to count  
the grains of sand  
beneath my feet.

—Kay Stripling





Bill and me  
 Walked down by the Sea.  
 "Oh, don't you see  
 What you mean to Me?  
 why Can't you be  
 In love with me?"  
 And I replied  
 Without tear or sight,

"'Tis truly sad to Say goodbye."  
 So Bill kissed me  
 And walked into the sea,  
 and never more Did look at me.  
 If our love could Not be,  
 No other would he  
 But rather Would be  
 alone in the sea.

"I hope he CAN swim," i thought.



# the Imperson- ality of a FOAM RUBBER PILLOW

Froggies snooze beneath the willows;  
People rest on rubber pillows.  
Froggies beat and mold the clay,  
Make it form a shape their way.  
The rubber, people beat and pound,  
They try to push the stuff around  
To make a dent to rest their heads,  
To have some comfort in their beds.  
Now feathers used to bend and sway

And move themselves around like clay,  
And personality was theirs  
To suit the sleeper's wants and cares.  
'Tis not the case with rubber foam,  
It makes the head all prone to roam  
And twist to find a place its own.  
But such a place is never known.  
Because foam rubber is not versatile,  
A rubber pillow's so impersonal.

—Nancy McCowell

## RAVIN' AGAINST Poe

Oh master of the frightful dream, upon whom I must write a theme,  
Describing your weird and wondrous volumes of unforgotten lore.  
As I read them, far from napping, I find the plots quite overlapping,  
As if you had been over-tapping, over-tapping your familiar store.  
'Tis your common fault, I will explain, over-tapping your familiar store—

Your fault is this and nothing more.

Your morbid subjects make me weary, and although it's just a theory,  
That over-writing any subject tends not to interest but to bore.  
The first I read was very ghastly, and since your work is very vastly,  
It seemed to me that very fastly, fastly each plot grew as before—

My only comment, nothing more.

Usher, Wilson, and Lady Ligeia, Prince Prospero and Rowena,  
Share a fate that you've constructed and is easy to explore.  
Your drug-filled dreams were very frightful, and though your tales  
Aren't deemed delightful,  
Must admit that they are quite full, quite full of some curious lore—

Yet repetitious evermore.

Whether man or woman falls as victim, always evil seems to lick them,  
Though they're pure and unsuspecting, undeserving to the core,  
It never fails that this great master, makes them meet with  
Great disaster,  
And to the innocent falls the vaster, vaster evil they must bore—

Always this, forevermore.

The supernatural is your domain, and though some readers call  
You insane,  
Because your tales are quite unreal, not taken from the days of  
Yore;  
Although they're mad, they're entertaining, and there's no need  
In your explaining,  
Their proof is that they're still remaining, remaining as American  
Lore—

To be read forevermore.

Counting death of youth and beauty, seems to be your doleful  
Duty,  
Repeatedly in your prose and poem, your ugly visions rise, as before.  
And in your poems your skillful rhyming, soon resembles troubled  
Whining,  
As does your prose that I'm defining, defining to become a bore—

They're all the same, there is no more.

—Bebe Ferrell



Giddap Dolly—

Horse shoes crush the new fallen leaves.  
Pied topped trees rush by,  
A fall color chart—swiftly, swiftly.

Slow Dolly—

Four legs cease their stacato beat.  
Alert ears stand and wait,  
Sensitive awareness—eagerly, eagerly.

Easy Dolly—

Slick mud offers a challenge.  
Hungry muck sucking at animal feet,  
Seemingly alive—slowly, slowly.

Whoa Dolly—

Squirrels leap lightly from limb to limb.  
Sounds are present and yet not heard.  
Unconscious sounds—quietly, quietly.

—Kathi Neal

## LETTER TO A YOUNG POET

Dear Pippa,

You send me your poems and ask my advice. What is right with them, what is wrong? Should you continue to write? And sadly, ironically, world-wearily, you ask what you intend as question without answer and answer without question: "What is poetry, anyway?" You expect a lot (which may be why you are a poet) and doom me to failure. But I will try, on the assumption you won't believe it anyway.

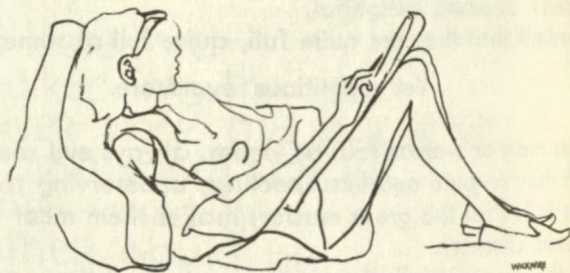
First, by all means you should continue to write poems. This does not mean you will necessarily be another Sappho, but if nothing else poems help you to sharpen your own vision, to see yourself, the world, God, man, the inter-relatedness of them all, and the separateness. Why wouldn't prose do this, too? Or music or painting? I'm sure they would, but for me poetry does it best of all. Words are rather mysterious entities. You set out to put them through their paces, send this one hurtling through your poet's hoop, that one cavorting like mad about the ring with a prancing white horse. Then they get out of hand, I don't know how. They start doing things you didn't know they could do. They do things you never even imagined. You end by performing their tricks for them, while they call the movements. You learn from them.

I wonder if in your poems you don't tend to tell secrets. You say to your reader, "Come on, I'm acquainted with the Mystery. I'll introduce you." Fine. You knock on the door. You listen. No answer. You tiptoe in, so as not to scare the shy thing, with the reader in tow. It's only a small violation you rationalize. "Why it is so dark in here?" the reader says, loudly. Is he frightened? "I'll just raise the blinds a bit," you say, "just a little, not much." Another small liberty: And then you raise them still more. "Well, let's snap on the lights," the impatient reader insists, "I haven't got all day." A kind girl, you oblige. But you never find the Mystery. In fact, the more light you force in, the less it seems this is where the Mystery lives. Have you made a mistake? No, not entirely, because you all are acquaintances, and this was the last address you had, as well as a standing invitation to come any time. You get flustered. You begin to tell how really very close you all have been in the past. You say things that are really violations of confidence, things that aren't justified. You say too much. But the by now grumbling reader, for whom you did it all, gets surly and stalks off, perhaps with a rude epithet chewed off the other side of his retreating shoulder. What has happened?

Maybe I can answer it. To begin with, Mystery must remain mysterious. That is its nature. A better type of reader would not have insisted upon a first-hand introduction but would have accepted the situation and relished your hints and modest revelations without presuming to violate the intimacy. He would have left you and the Mystery to work out your own relationship. If sometimes your words were cryptic, all right, he would not force the issue. Some things must not be forced—the finer, more gentle things, including mysteries; just as some things can not be held back—the terrier, more tragic things, including mysteries.

Rhythm is enormously important, but I don't know what to say about it. Maybe you should ignore it until you feel the need for it. My tendency is to trust one's instinct. This may be inadequate. If you must have something to go by, try just counting syllables in a line. Don't bother, though, if that doesn't suit you. Refuse to be bound slavishly by anything. I'm back to trusting your instinct again. Rhythm, remember, is a part of form, and in form there is strength, grace, beauty. Luckily, there are many forms. Form has its moral aspect, of course, but this is a problem for advanced poetries. Pursue and we will be led into difficult aesthetic and metaphysical terrain. Let's stop at the edge of the mountains for the present.

I suppose good general advice on writing poems would be to have everything as simple and straightforward as possible—e.g., choice of words (you could improve this); normal word order in sentences, without inversions (you do this reasonably well). Use a minimum of words. Do not prettify. Be honest. Which is difficult. Read. For a start, try Sara Teasdale and H. D. and Emily Dickinson. They exemplify many things I approve; they violate many, too. Read some haiku to see how much can be done with a few words and a few objects—a leaf, a blossom, a frog, a butterfly. These are only a beginning, but they ought to show how difficult it is to write simply. Give any passing jackanapes a copy of Frazer's *Golden Bough* and maybe Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* and he can write poetry so rare, so symbol-laden, so exquisitely difficult that it is everything except meaningful. Avoid mixed metaphors, things



like "hands of blossoms which mould life's flaming song." If logic in one's metaphors is not absolutely mandatory, at least illogic and confusion ought to be avoided. One must be as clear and precise as possible. Clear for the eye (since you use visual imagery a lot). However, much of what you do is for the feeling, the emotions, not for eye, ear, touch, and the like. These don't come off any too well. Further, in a science-dominated or influenced world, most personifications ("faces of flowers," "a tree's flowing hair") aren't easy to accept. Use them if you absolutely must, but play them down. Have you thought of the philosophy such things commit you to? (I didn't think so.)

In some of your poems, you speak for God quite a bit. Aren't you presumptuous? Surely, a little humility is good in relation to God. The will of God is difficult to know and to explain. Should one not hesitate to say with entire confidence what is God's way, wish, and design? You seem sure of these. Who is worthy? Is this genuinely your experience? For most of us, clearly, no!

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

# The Man of CULTURE

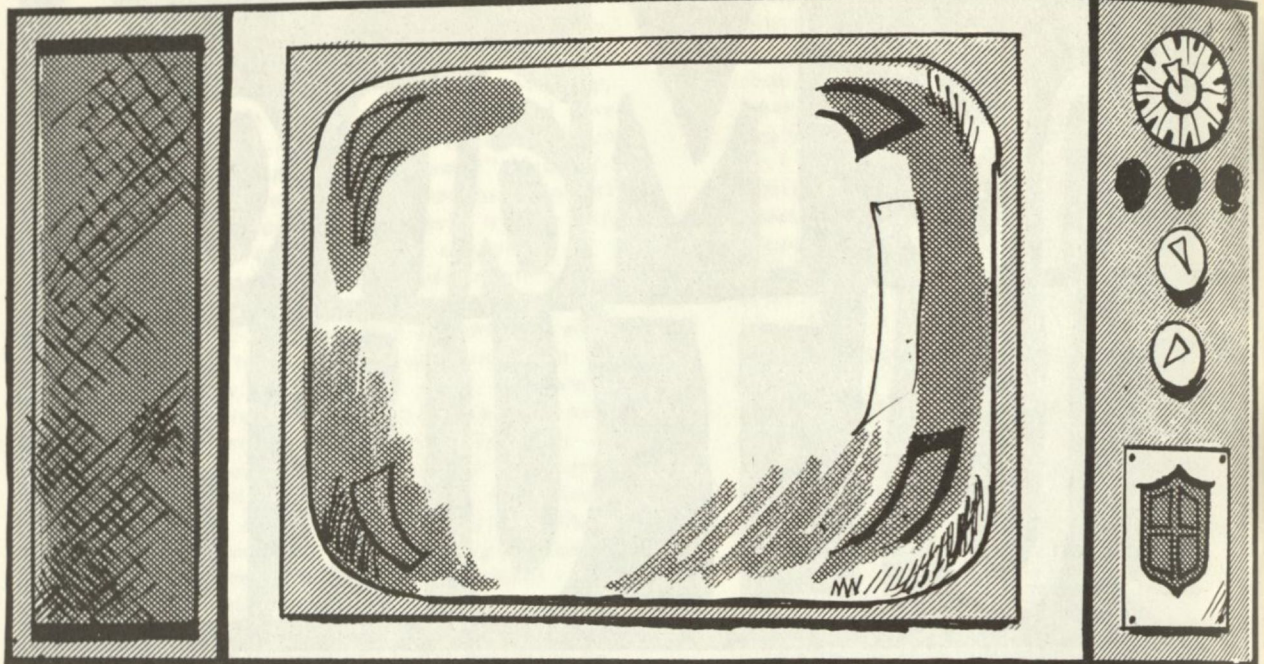
Fred Smith was glad that today was Tuesday and that he didn't have to go to work this morning. He hugged his knees with a smile of contentment and snuggled deeper into the warmth of his bed. Even when the radio-clock blared into the silence with the throbbing sounds of Wagner, he didn't mind. Usually he dreaded the mornings when the station played Wagner for its "good morning" music. He preferred Tchaikovsky. But today was special and not even Wagner at 8:00 in the morning could spoil it, he thought as he placed his bare feet on the cold tile floor.

Yawning and scratching his head, he walked into the kitchenette and opened the pantry door. He squinted his eyes and tried to decide what kind of cereal he wanted. He finally chose that in the blue box because he liked the picture of Millet's "The Angelus" on the label and because it tasted like wheat. He liked wheat. And besides, the others tasted like corn and he didn't feel like eating corn cereal this morning or like looking at their Dutch Master labels. He poured the dry cereal into a bowl, added milk, and ate slowly. After the third mouthful, he began to examine carefully the painted figures around the rim of the bowl. The sales-girl at the dime store had told him that they were copies of genuine tenth century Byzantine decorative art, so he had bought a dozen. He had never used any of the other bowls but this one, but it made him feel pretty important to have copies of Byzantine art in the pantry.

He finished the cereal and reached for a cigarette. While he placed it in his mouth and lit the match, he thought that it was mighty damn nice not to have to go to one of those blasted concerts today. He knew the boss always expected his office workers to go on their days off, but the performance for today had been canceled because one of the star musicians had been taken ill. A convenient illness! He smiled to himself, leaning back in his chair and enjoying his cigarette. As he smoked, he looked around at the walls and told himself that next week he would have to buy some new paintings. He was tired of his old ones—he'd had them for two years. And there was a clearance sale on some Picassos at the corner department store. He didn't know whether he particularly liked Picasso or not, but someone had told him that Picassos were supposed to be very good this year. He hated sales, though. There were always so many housewives around elbowing him and snatching pictures from his hands that he could never make up his mind. Maybe he would take a couple out on approval to see how they blended with the over-all atmosphere of the room. That way he would have more time to think about it.



NOTE: A LIMITED NUMBER OF **PAST** ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE IN 311 WEST. SEE LOUISE MARCHMAN



He washed his bowl and turned on the T. V. The daily literary lecture was on and he caught the name of Dante. He thought that it sounded familiar, but he couldn't remember much about the person, only that he had written something that was supposed to be great literature. Glancing at his watch, he saw that he had fifteen minutes before his special program came on, so he decided to get a book from his personal library. He smiled when he thought of all those books belonging to him. That was something to be proud of. Of course he hadn't had time to read any of them yet and he felt just a bit guilty. But he reminded himself of how much better the apartment looked with the new shelves and how he could always use the blank pages in the book fronts for memo notes, and he felt better.

He selected a book that he thought had an interesting cover and sat down to wait for the next program. The lecture was over and the commercials were on. He liked to listen to them because he could always guess which commercial was coming on next by the music that was played. Moon Glow Hairspray played Debussy, and "Come Hither" After Shave lotion, he remembered, played Stravinsky's "The Rite

of Spring." Here lately they had begun to read the commercials in verse. His favorite was an advertisement for some new ingredient in Pleasure Full Coffee which gave a "sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused." He supposed that it came from some famous poem, but he couldn't remember which one.



The commercials ended and he curled his toes in anticipation. The next program was the weekly re-run of old movies of 15 years ago, used to point out the cultural deficiencies of that less fortunate period. The commentator announced that the movie for the day was a film entitled "McClintock," a perfect example of crude, decadent art. Fred Smith shivered with pleasure and put down the book. As the screen filled with the sound of guns and galloping horses, he shook his head. It was a damn shame that T. V. programs couldn't be like this more often.

—Kay Stripling



# A GREEN TREE IN GEDDE

A GREEN TREE IN GEDDE by ALAN SHARP (NAL-WORLD, \$5) is a three hundred seventy-one page comment on human relations. The novel is of humans. Sharp views their essence as the moving toward self-realization. This need for self-realization is basic to man at any age in history, but it is hardest to recognize and to contend with in the twentieth century world of social complexities. In GEDDE three men spend twenty-seven chapters discovering the paradoxes of autonomy and the need for others that are themselves. The paradox is drawn between man, the master of his choice, and man, who needs to submit to some order.

The novel is divided into three books, portraying the lives of three interrelated men. John Moseby is a graduate student, is married, and has a three-year-old daughter. Moseby's home, work and social relationships keep him firmly tied to the town of Greenock. But Greenock is more than the physical location which holds him; the town and Moseby are symbolically inseparable. In the dimensions of Greenock are found the dimensions of the man's personality:

Greenock lies along the Clyde littoral and is built up onto the hills behind. Thus it is a long lateral town and the streets rise steeply and provide open view of the river and the Argyllshire hills. . . . The buildings are of sandstone block, greybuffs and occasional reds and are erected in monolithic tenements achieving their only rhythm in the flowing lines enforced by the land. . . . The river flows, the hills abide, and the town ponders these images of evanescence and antiquity, while above, with the disinterest of the truly eternal, the sky endures.

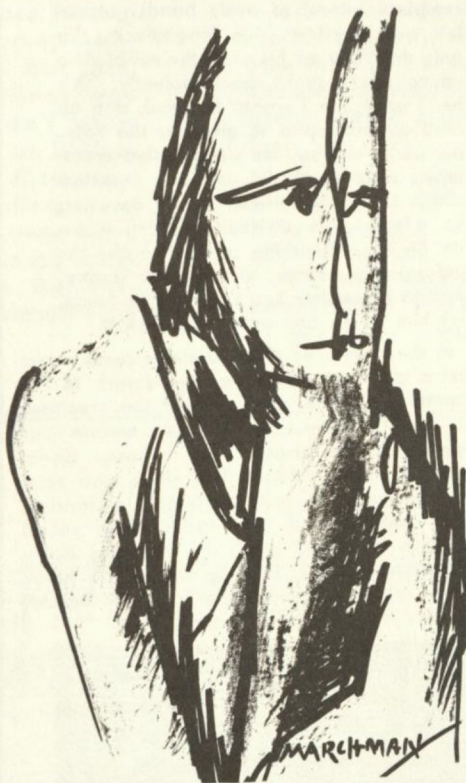
Moseby has chosen the role to which he must submit himself. His story comes in his efforts, successes, and failures to realize himself in that role.

Moseby's old Army buddy, Harry Gibbon, leaves Greenock as the story opens. His role

is to be found in Greenock, but first he has to leave. Then, in realizing his own identity, he can return to Greenock and let himself belong to the social structure there. Unknowingly, he has the very answer he seeks in the reason he cites to justify his departure, "if you don't go you can't come back."

Peter Cuffee accompanies Gibbon on their jaunt across Europe. Cuffee is an artist, a baroque individual who attempts to convince himself that he will never have to be bound by anything but his own will and who attempts to prove his singularity with great obsequiousness. For Cuffee, no action has any meaning aside from the proof it gives him of his dominance over all human events or the pleasure it offers him. Self-realization comes to Cuffee as he is forced to recognize himself in a world of human relationships, relationships that show him he not only can impose order on the world but also is ordered by it.

Sharp, a young Scotsman, displays a great deal of talent with this, his first novel. The moods and characters he creates are effectively expressed through his mellow,



rhythmical use of Scottish dialect. GEDDE is rich with an architectural sense of dynamics and of perspective. Sharp's style is unique. His ruddy images dissect reality; though based in sensuous perception, his images subtly create a view of man's life as a continuum of choice:

He remembered them running up onto the headland pulling her behind his breathless and shouting, laughing and stumbling up over the sprung short turf until unbelievably the sea flooded into sight, sweeping out of eyeshot, beyond imagination, and joy in a surge like the sea poured over the mind and in that moment was the sea and the turf and

a hand in the wind; joy was palpable and was the world worn skin-close, the flesh of his experience, and all there was was the sea and the sun on it and her hand in his and the smell of her short sprung hair and the wind blowing over the turf and trying with gentle unsuccess to pry apart their kissing faces.

Alan Sharp has a lilting sense of movement in words. But even more effective he has a sensitive touch for moving through seemingly unrelated areas of man's consciousness to show the patterns that underlie a character's life composition:

Glimpses into kitchens hung with holy pictures and soldiers dead in their frames. Closes through into backgreens, when he was a child he thought the psalm said "in past orr green he leadeth me" and he had a picture of Jesus ducking under the clotheslines.

The novel has been praised by American reviewers for its descriptive beauty but has been dismissed as a novel of little literary worth. The major criticism is of the subject matter; the book has been called pornographic and over-obsessed with sensuality. But as the SATURDAY REVIEW pointed out, Sharp's characters are only normal if you consider the Kinsey reports.

Sharp uses sexual behavior extensively in his novel, not to create an effect of sensationalism, but as a medium through which he observes the full reality of man's conflicting needs. He creates a concept of a two-dimensional man, confined, driven, and often thwarted by his own nature and by the reality in which he exists; yet tempered and made capable by the element of choice. Perhaps the key to Sharp's philosophy and likewise to the meaning of the novel lies in a poem created by Sharp and accredited to one of his characters:

A great tree there is in Gedde growing,  
And in its branches the hawk it perches  
With the dove; fruit there is for all to eat,  
Golden and silver globes and purple plums,  
And all abloss with bloom it brondes.  
No perifol is there nor foliomort,  
And hallards none,  
But green leaf everlasting.

Know ye not this halidome, this greenheart  
Axeltree; know ye not Gedde  
Its seed li's within us each.

—J. Ragland



## THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

by Nikos Kazantzakis

(Translated from the Greek by P. A. Bien)

Nikos Kazantzakis, a man born in 1883, died in 1957. These words encompass a life which perhaps has only been equaled by one of his own heroes. Well-educated, traveled, an intellectual, a man of the people, torn by a search for an ideal; he lived a life in which spirit and flesh battled constantly. Kazantzakis' Christ reflects this battle. To quote the author:

The dual substance of Christ—the yearning, so human, so superhuman, of man to attain to God or, more exactly, to return to God and identify himself with him—has always been a deep inscrutable mystery to me. This nostalgia for God; at once so mysterious and so real has opened in me large wounds and also large flowing springs.

My principal anguish and the source of all my joys and sorrows from my youth onward has been the incessant, merciless battle between the spirit and the flesh . . . I have loved my body and did not want it to perish; I loved my soul and did not want it to decay . . . This book was written because I wanted to offer a supreme model to the man who struggles. . . .

The key to all of Kazantzakis' writing is his Greekness. He was one of the Greek people of vibrant imaginations and natural poetry of words. Metaphors abound in the language of the Greek peasants in whose love of words Kazantzakis sees the path to understanding their imaginations. The key to Kazantzakis' writing also fits his subject. In *THE LAST TEMPTATION*, Christ is a Greek in Judaic Messiah's robes.

In *THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST*, we see Jesus first as a youth, tormented by dreams in which he hears "the whole soul of Israel" calling "Adonai, God of Israel, how long?", and there is a red-bearded man pointing at him saying that he is hiding, pretending that he is not the One. "After him, lads!" The sleeping Jesus leaps from his bed and piles all that is in his carpenter's shop against the door.

Awake he asks himself if God or Devil sends these dreams and glances at the nail-studded strap with which he lashes himself so that he will remain tranquil through the night. After a red-bearded youth enters, we find that this Jesus makes crosses for crucifixions of rebellious Israelites. The red-bearded

one asks, "How will you ever pay for all those sins, poor devil?" Jesus answers, "With my life, Judas, my brother; I have nothing else."

Kazantzakis' Christ is human, a human all too aware of his divineness. His torments are caused by this divineness striking him from the heights of human happiness.

. . . and then, one day—Passover, spring-time, glorious weather—he went to Cana, his mother's village, to choose a wife. His mother had forced him; she wanted to see him married. He was twenty years old, his cheeks were covered with thick curly fuzz and his blood boiled so furiously he could no longer sleep at night. His mother had taken advantage of this, the acme of his youth, and prevailed upon him to go to Cana, her own village, to select a bride.

So there he stood, a red rose in his hand, gazing at the village girls as they danced under a large, newly foliated poplar. And while he looked and weighed one against the other—he wanted them all, but did not have the courage to choose—suddenly he heard cackling laughter behind him: a cool fountain rising from the bowels of the earth. He turned. Descending upon him with her red sandals, unplaited hair and complete armor of ankle bands, bracelets and earrings was Magdalene, the only daughter of his uncle the rabbi. The young man's mind shook violently. "It's her I want, her I want!" he cried, and he held out his hand to give her the rose. But as he did so, ten claws nailed themselves into his head and two frenzied wings beat above him, tightly covering his temples. He shrieked and fell down on his face, frothing at the mouth. His unfortunate mother, writhing with shame, had to throw her kerchief over his head, lift him up in her arms, and depart.

In the throes of these torments Jesus seeks first a monastery and then the desert. In the monastery, Judas, sworn to kill the crucifier, as Jesus is known, is powerless before this man whom he terms a lamb because Christ turns the other cheek. This man, who says that his secret is pity for man's sufferings, holds Judas' hand with words which recall Joseph's flowering staff, the lightning flash, the fainting spells, and the voices. The memory of all these things cause Judas to wonder if Jesus is more than he seems.



The questions in Judas' mind are in others' minds, too, and one by one the disciples and the followers come to Jesus. Overlapping and entwining, all these things lead Kazantzakis' Christ to the traditional miracles and the gospel trail to Golgotha. The last temptation on the cross is a vision of common, ordinary life—wives, children, home and hearth, old age and peace—with only a mocking Negro dwarf as reminder (or watchdog for Satan?). Then one day, Jesus, an old man, hears heavy steps and gasping breaths. As the dwarf



throws open the door, he cries, "It's your old companions, Jesus of Nazareth!" Peter, "No longer a rock, but a sponge full of holes!" and the rest filing in, bearing the signs of their faith, bring revelation.

His head quivered. Suddenly he remembered where he was, who he was and why he felt pain. A wild, indomitable joy took possession of him. No, no, he was not a coward, a deserter, a traitor. No, he was nailed to the cross. He had stood his ground honorable to the very end; he had kept his word. The moment he cried ELI, ELI and fainted, Temptation had captured him for a split second and led him astray. The joys, marriages and children were lies; the decrepit, degraded old men who shouted coward, deserter, traitor at him were lies. All—were illusions sent by the Devil. His disciples were alive and thriving. They had gone over sea and land and were proclaiming the Good News. Everything had turned out as it should, glory be to God!

He uttered a triumphant cry: IT IS ACCOMPLISHED!

And it was as though he had said: Everything has begun.

The old tales of Christ's story weave in and out in this portrayal of Christ for modern man: For example, the inn-keeper who allows Mary and Joseph to use his stable is the man whose life was saved by the Good Samaritan. In this book, we can see Christ engaged in the same struggle we face without the supreme Will of Christ which conquers the human instinct but does not nullify it. The characters of the New Testament in new characterizations become human in that their bonds are ours. Kazantzakis, in showing that the world was real and tempting in its pleasures to Christ, makes His final rejection of temptation more than doctrine.

—Suzanne Spence

You must let words say what they will, can. Instead, you are trying to force them into your meanings. Stop a moment. Are you really honest? Are these your meanings? Or just what you have been told? Is this your truth? If the words say what they can, through you, it is, in some way, your truth as well as theirs. We mustn't confuse what we know with what we would like to know, and this is double-edged. (Always remember the grace beyond the reach of art; also the knowledge, the form, the things you know as a poet which you never knew before and would not know otherwise.)

Let not only words but also things speak through you. Their meanings, not yours. This is difficult advice to follow. Listen to what things have to tell. Do they say, "I am part of God's creation and closer to Him than you. I can teach you, O Erring Man, the truths of God!"? For myself, I rather doubt it. I think they would more likely say, "I am!" And perhaps, if they deign to notice men, "We're all in this together, Strange Mobile Creatures." Meaning all in existence together.

Still, I suspect the moral truths might actually be there, in nature, in things, to be intuited or learned, all right. But won't they be truer if they are revealed in their own way, accent, and time, and are not forced? I wonder if you are forcing and thus falsifying a bit—oh, of course, without meaning to or even knowing it. But that, too, is a fault, since poets in some final way must know, even if only that they don't know so very much after all. Don't become as lifeless as a painted and bedecked Charlie McCarthy. A poetry of things with no interpretation is, of course, not enough. Ultimately, you may have to help things speak through you. Poems, after all, are written for people, not things. But, certainly, things can help you find and liberate your own poetic voice.

You start from the proper mental state to write poetry. You know life is a humbug, yet precious. You see disparities, discrepancies, inadequacies, injustices, ironies, paradoxes—the myriad, intertwined complexities of life. You want to express the things you see. In case what I've said so far is mad, let me pass on some traditional advice here. It is that as a poet your job is to express what you understand of the world but not the world itself. (I think I believe that in the process of creating poetry you can express the world, even things you did not understand until after you expressed them.) But to go on with the traditional advice, you must know and understand, clearly, before you express (whereas, to me, art is discovery, for artist and reader both). However, as part of this knowing, you must know where the known disappears into the unknown, the mystery—or mysteries. Doesn't my idea meet the other one here? Or am I confused? Either way, occasionally with luck or grace or love, you can transcend . . . what?—self? mind? knowledge?—and reach . . . what?—wisdom? certainty? truth? I'm not sure. Anyway, you have the requisite tension, double vision, I don't know a name for it, from which real poetry can begin. Yet what comes out is often false, trite, untrue. You—admit it!—do not really feel this way. These words don't convey what you do feel, and what you think is not as clear in your own mind as it should be. Why? That is what this letter is really about. Most young poets (and many old ones, too) have these same problems. They are not yours alone—don't be jealous! Any real accomplishment is difficult and very likely won out of bitter struggle. Great praises may be the most difficult of all.

If I have answered your questions, then I have failed. For I hoped to suggest a prospect of questions beyond the ones you asked.

Best wishes,  
K.

## Ode to Brubeck

S. Ramhorst '65

Handwritten musical score for "Ode to Brubeck" by S. Ramhorst '65. The score is written on three systems of three staves each. The first system has lyrics: "Bru-beck, Bru-beck I've been thinking what if Bach were here a-while? Would his fugue in coun-tra-puntal texture typ-i-cal of all his works I think Doo-wa-di doo-wa-di scho-bi-do doo-wa-di doo-wa-di sco-bi-doo-wa".

Handwritten musical score for "Ode to Brubeck" by S. Ramhorst '65. The second system has lyrics: "Would you two be quite a-like or would you slight-ly change his style? Make you gasp with un-ex-pect-ed joy or turn your com-plex thoughts to drink? A-le-lu-ia a-men, a-men a-le-lu-ia a-men!".

I know nothing but my own pulse,  
 Nothing but the unforgiveable feel  
 Of flesh to flesh.  
 You could sing to me of cool beds without passion,  
 Of cool sheets  
 And great blankets  
 And solitude, death of desire.



But all joy left is in the body—  
 Books and thought too sad.  
 But give me a lovely boy  
 To lie with in high grasses,  
 Nude in warm sun.

Faun and nymph,  
 Dry lip to lip,  
 Young breasts and lithe legs.  
 Sun's light through closed eyes,  
 Grass-stained elbows.  
 Eyes open nose to nose.  
 Deep look, recession into self  
 And fear to touch that which once  
 Was closest.

Sleep in warmth and flowers, children—  
 You have learned the secret  
 And the only sin of man.  
 Making love in twilight  
 Is like kissing Death's saddest smile.  
 Light, light, faun,  
 That I may know my violator.

—Susan Litten

## to Cinda

Where did you come from all smooth

And unreal in your reality?

My hopes—so much more barren,

My awareness, aware as I am,

All unaware.

What you have shown me cannot

Be explained,

But God Himself would look away

If I forgot.

"I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on?"

—J. M. Keller

## Modest Expectations: A Critique

A critic would expect to find a sameness in the contents of a student literary magazine--a sameness of outlook, of subject, of theme, of device, of ineptitude which bears promise of melioration. This comes not from the perversity of critics, or the obtuseness. Just as there are types of human beings rather than distinct individuals, as experience of life confirms, so the case should be with art. But here more than with that preposterous creature, man, one is inclined to assert the contrary. Human types (the flirt, the fop, the shrew, the lecher, the pander, the braggart) jostle in our beloved *Vanity Fair*, the clock round, indistinguishable from ourselves. Is the Kingdom of Letters no different? It is different, one says, hesitantly; or does one merely hope? Despite ancient ideas to the contrary, moderns find little relation between the artist and the work. A good poem is never predictable no matter how much we know about the author as person. So talent is largely unaccountable and unclassifiable. With that assumption, we may look at the poems in this issue of the magazine and note a thing or two. Limited space prohibits justice done, and criticism is more fallible than art. May meaningful discussion be provoked. But now we are back to human nature where our expectations are modest. And you've just been insulted. Modestly.

Now, the poems. "Why I Am, What I Am: Just One Glance" parodies popular songs twice, probably without intent. Everything present in a poem doesn't have to be intended, but everything achieved must be accommodated, else poems are not fabulous artifice but mistakes. The theme posed in the title is not fulfilled. The metrical pattern is more or less arbitrary (essentially breaking the lines up according to units of grammar, e.g. the phrase or clause modifiers which are lines 3, 8, 15, 16). Such a pattern of order is better than none, but chances may be missed that are inherent in form self-consciously used. This poem has the arrogant ennui of youth with its ignorant fear of age and experience. Probably not intended either.

"Antithesis." Parallelism is a fine device, if it is used well. "Why People." An oak is an oak is an oak is an oak is an oak.

"My ship sails." If the natural object is not an adequate symbol, poetry is not thriving. Whoever encountered a "bay of life" that was not first a bay, or "shores of love" that were not first shores?

"Until the dove of green meadows." This dove has flown right out of the Bible, appropriately leaving most of its meaning behind. Suggestion: birds in poems ought to be real birds.

"I know nothing but my own pulse." See how much you can come up with about the narrator and whether you can believe that it all goes together without radical contradiction. Any "lovely boy" had rather meet Madelaine Usher when tiptoeing through the tulips than this fretful female. Kiss and tell, so to speak, is the least thing she'd do. C.f. D.H. Lawrence's comments on American women as vampires.

"The Impersonality of a Foam Rubber Pillow." Hell.

"Giddap Dolly." Check the punctuation for nominative of address. Tell the last two lines to the first Kantian you meet. This poem may even be personal and "true." Poetry is difficult.

"The train whistle sang . . . ." The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts--and poetry is still difficult.

"Day to Day." Why?

"Winter Whisperings." Delete all the dashes, then the unnecessary interpretation of details. After that, the difficulty of poetry begins to seem worth it after all.

"I think." One likes Dotti, despite the unintended ambiguity of "Sunday dresses." But when the line, "filthy language," comes up, one can see her striking the match to ignite the faggots.

"The 'Perfect' Strangers." Things are said here (lines 3-4, 5) and implied (lines 11, 12-13) that probably are not meant. "Each . . . their" --watch grammar. The poem shows perception, but is too generalized to be living and breathing the way poems are.

"Mistaken Identity." All the world loathes an American college girl, more even than this author does. Her implied solution is adumbrated in the phrase, "Lighting only a room," and in the capital letter of "Point." Listen, Sweetie, these creatures may be worse than your solutions can redeem.

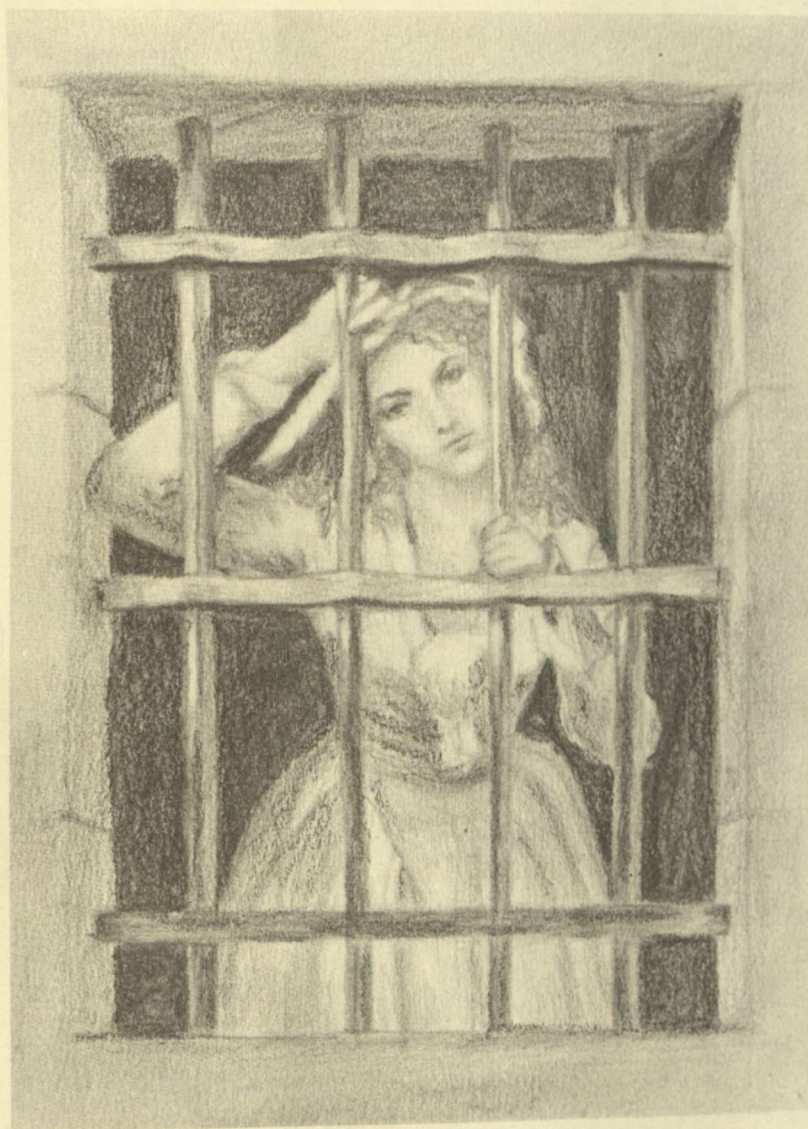
"Ravin' Against Poe." Parodies ought to be fun.

"Old women gnash their teeth." Almost a poem, but the verbal fluency needs controlling. This mind may be tough enough, especially about those awful other people, but it is not self-critical enough.

"Surf's Up, Baby." Doesn't quite make it. The last stanza is the best. Can't the first two be scrapped?

"Once I could see infinity . . . ." The closest thing to a poem in the lot. Perhaps overwritten. Better too much than not enough.

Poets of Wesleyan, I commend your efforts. Grading you as your teachers do, I would put a reluctant C minus on the poems of this issue, taken as a group. You ought to read more. Good poems are timeless, but some things of value have been written since 1850. As writers, you are not living in your own time and place, not using your own language. Failing in these, the reality you face is not your own, and you are not alive. Haven't your teachers, old and contrary as they doubtless are, suggested that you read Yeats, Frost, Stevens, Eliot, Pound, Williams, Auden, and Ransom, among others? Just to see how they solved these problems? In poetry writing, if you steal creatively, it doesn't count. Except in your favor.



Yonder breaks the light of Macon